

Iron County Register

BY H. D. AKE.
BRONTON, MISSOURI.

LONE HOLLOW.

Or, The Peril of the Penroys.

A Thrilling and Romantic Story of Love and Adventure.

By JAMES M. MERRILL, AUTHOR OF "DOGS BILL," "FISHER JOE" AND OTHER STORIES.

(Copyright, 1929, by the A. N. Kellogg Newspaper Company.)

CHAPTER VII.—CONTINUED.

"This is madness," declared the young hunter. "To quarrel thus on account of a girl. Must the softer sex always bring war? I gave you credit for better sense, Captain Starbright."

"But that young mudsill assaulted me like a coward!"

"He made the first assault!"

"Over Miss Penroy?"

"He has pretended to have some claim on her."

"And you make the same pretension," Fingal interrupted, with a peculiar twinkle of the eye.

"It seems to be a foolish quarrel at best. You will do well to take my advice and give up thoughts of winning the girl."

"And leave her to that mudsill—never!" cried the Captain, still hot and foolish from his recent encounter. "I have sworn to make Grace Penroy my wife, and no greasy mechanic shall stand in the way of my quest."

"Perhaps not, but there may be a gentleman who will win the prize in spite of you both."

"How is that?"

"I believe that Miss Penroy has become thoroughly disgusted with both you and Austin Wentworth, in which case I am just conceited enough to imagine that I stand the best show," and young Fingal smote his breast with his clenched hand, and straightened his form until he looked the picture of a young Prince of the blood.

Captain Starbright regarded the youth in astonishment. He seemed to realize for the first time that Louis Fingal was dangerously handsome.

"In faith, youngster, I should hate to believe that one so tender had entered the lists against me," retorted the Captain, forcing a laugh.

"You may find me tougher than you imagine," declared Fingal, solemnly.

"You handed me a note a few days since, on the occasion of our first meeting. Was it of your composition?"

The Captain regarded Fingal keenly as he put the question. His gaze had not the effect intended. The young hunter was not the least disconcerted.

"I shall make no denials, august Captain," answered Fingal, stroking his mustache with a grave look.

"I am then to understand that you mean to interfere with my plans?"

"Understand any thing you please, my dear Captain."

"Confound you!" muttered Starbright, angered at the cool impudence of the young hunter. "I warn you to keep away from this vicinity and leave me to myself, or you may rue your impertinence in the time to come. You understand?"

"Certainly."

"And you will heed the warning?"

"Certainly."

"I am glad to find you sensible."

"Always that, Captain Starbright," assured the young hunter. "Fair means will be permitted to use in a suit for Miss Penroy's hand, but when you step beyond that look to yourself. The eagle will see that the hawk cannot outwit him."

Then, bowing low, Fingal turned and darted away with the swiftness of a deer. Captain Starbright stared after him in rage and astonishment.

CHAPTER VIII.—A LETTER.

A few days later.

Grace Penroy and Lura Joyce stood together in the room of the former. Grace had just loosened her waving masses of yellow hair, and stood by the glass combing the golden strands, while her cousin loomed against a richly-carved mantel over the narrow grate and regarded the pretty girl before her with no attempt to conceal her admiration.

"I do not wonder that so many men are in love with you," said Lura at length, after full a minute given to silent admiration. "If I was half as beautiful I should feel proud as Lucifer, and—"

"Lura, please do not flatter that I am giving you, young lady. You are the most beautiful human creature I ever beheld, and I say again it's no wonder the men love you so, and are ready to cut one another's throats through their infatuation. There's the gallant Captain, and handsome Austin Wentworth, and—"

"Lura, you cease!"

Grace turned now and faced her cousin, a pained expression on her white face and lurking in her honest gray eyes.

"Don't you like to hear the truth? Are facts so repugnant to you that you feel hurt at their utterance, pretty cousin?"

"You do not understand, Lura," said Grace, in a low tone, slightly tremulous with feeling. "None of the gentlemen named are sought to me."

"Not one?"

Lura Joyce seemed surprised.

"That is the truth, Lura. I beg you to say nothing about any of these fortune-hunters."

"Ah, there's the rub!" exclaimed Miss Joyce, with a merry laugh. "I understand the situation exactly. You don't encourage one of these fellows for fear he is looking only after your fortune. I've no doubt your fears are not unfounded. I have been at Lone Hollow but a fortnight, yet in that comparatively short space of time I have made a discovery."

Lura Joyce threw herself into a rocker and clasped her hands over one of the arms, peering up from under sandy brows at her cousin.

As Grace made no remark Lura went on: "I have spotted one fortune-hunter at least, cousin mine, the handsome, heartless Captain Starbright. Have you ever thought of his attentions seriously, Grace?"

"Never."

"That is good," ejaculated Lura, with evident satisfaction. "Captain Starbright is a fortune-hunter in every sense of the term, and as heartless as a demon. Have I met him before? I thought you knew that to marry him. It's a fact all the same, and you know it now. He was after my fortune, which proved a myth, and so the gallant Captain ran away from that part of the country to seek out the granddaughter of old Morgan Vandine, and if possible win a fortune and wife at one and the same time. He has not yet succeeded and never will, if you are wise, Grace."

"I shall be wise enough not to wed one I do not love," answered the heiress, simply.

"Well said, cousin. I hope you will stick to that text."

"You may be sure that I will."

"Now tell me, where one that you do love, Grace?"

The girl at the glass busied herself with her toilet without seeming to notice this question. It was repeated, with still no answer.

Then Lura Joyce turned to her feet, and, crossing the carpet, peered over the fence to her cousin. She was not wholly surprised to find the honest gray eyes brimming with tears.

A smile flitted over the countenance of

Lura. Was it possible that she rejoiced in the trouble that was growing in the heart of her cousin?

"See here, Grace, is it this that you are feeling bad about?"

Lura laid a gold ring on the dresser in front of her cousin.

"I found it on the grass yesterday. I imagined that you might have dropped it. I am sure that I saw it on your finger a few days since."

It was her ring indeed, the one she had given her betrothed, Austin Wentworth, but a few days since—her engagement ring. Doubtless he had flung it away that day when they had quarreled. The sight of it only the more embittered her feelings. Grace did not offer to touch it, but continued her occupation with increased nervousness.

"It is not my ring," asserted Grace, trying to speak firmly, indifferently.

"Are you sure?"

The smile deepened on the face of Lura.

"Yes, I am sure."

"Now, how could I have been so deceived? I was sure that I saw this ring on your finger a few days since."

"It was mine then, but—"

"Just read this, Grace. I think you have made yourself miserable for nothing."

Lura thrust a letter into the hand of her cousin and then stole from the room. What a thrill shot over Grace's being as she recognized the well-known cursive of Austin Wentworth.

Sinking to a chair, she tore open the letter with nervous fingers and read:

"DEAR GRACE: I am ashamed of the temper I exhibited at our last meeting. I believe I was wholly in the wrong, and if you can forgive me and take me back into your affections you will never have cause to regret it. I will never distrust you again whatever may happen. A word or a line from you, in token of forgiveness, by the bearer of this will be eagerly looked for."

"ASTIN."

Grace pressed the note to her lips, while tears flowed freely. She breathed easier, and a happy smile touched her face as she came to her feet, after concealing the precious letter.

A few minutes later Lura came in and stood regarding her cousin with a smiling, half-questioning look on her face. She seemed at once that Grace was in a more pleasant mood, and this was sufficient assurance that the young mechanic's letter had been welcome.

"I shall carry the answer to-day, Grace."

Miss Penroy turned with a beaming face toward her cousin.

"I did not bring this from Stonefield, Lura. Certainly. Why not? I would delight to carry your answer to-day, for, to tell the truth, the foolish boy is about distracted over the thought of losing you—and a fortune."

"Lura Joyce!"

"Well, didn't you say they were all fortune-hunters, Miss Penroy? Don't look at me so sternly. I was only saying 'I was only taking you at your word.'"

"But I did not mean—"

"Well, as the girl hesitated."

"Did not mean Austin?"

"No, it is not he. Well, hurry and prepare an answer."

"But you can not go to Stonefield to-day. The stage will take the letter over in the morning."

"I will never do to trust that mode of conveyance; besides, the boy expects an answer to-night. A ten-minute ride is just sport for Romeo and I."

Then Lura danced up to Grace, embraced and kissed her, and quickly rushed from the room.

Grace, full of happy thoughts at this unexpected reconciliation, proceeded at once to pen an answer to the letter she had received that would bring joy and peace to the heart of the anxious young mechanic.

Grace was sealing the letter when her cousin returned.

"All ready, Grace? Romeo is anxious for a race over the hills, and I am fully-jailed snap when he reads this!"

"Then snatching a kiss Lura darted from the room and the house."

Fate willed, however, that the letter thus consigned to the hand of Lura Joyce should never come under the eye of the Stonefield mechanic. A dark tragedy was soon to unfold and horrify the inmates of the old stone house at Lone Hollow.

CHAPTER IX.—THE TRAGEDY.

It was ten miles to Stonefield, through a comparatively unsettled country.

During her two weeks' sojourn at Lone Hollow Lura Joyce had been very fond of the road on the back of her own animal, a sleek black gelding she was pleased to call Romeo.

"I've heard there is a short cut to the town," mused the young girl as she rode over the road at an easy pace. "And they do say that it leads past old Mother Cabrera's hut, the gipsy fortune-teller. I've a good notion to take that route. I should have time, and might see the old hag, to boot. What say, Romeo, shall we take the path or the dusty road to Stonefield?"

She patted her horse gently, speaking to him as though he were human.

A low whinny answered her appeal, and Lura laughed.

"You say yes, good Romeo. Well, I'll think it on, as the old Romans would say."

When she came to the path that turned from the main highway, Lura drew rein and sat for some moments in a brown study. She glanced up at the sun, then into the woods, which looked cool and inviting.

The long path passed the meridian, and should she follow the road it would not lose the goodly town of Stonefield.

She patted her horse gently, speaking to him as though he were human.

A low whinny answered her appeal, and Lura laughed.

"You say yes, good Romeo. Well, I'll think it on, as the old Romans would say."

When she came to the path that turned from the main highway, Lura drew rein and sat for some moments in a brown study. She glanced up at the sun, then into the woods, which looked cool and inviting.

The long path passed the meridian, and should she follow the road it would not lose the goodly town of Stonefield.

She patted her horse gently, speaking to him as though he were human.

A low whinny answered her appeal, and Lura laughed.

"You say yes, good Romeo. Well, I'll think it on, as the old Romans would say."

When she came to the path that turned from the main highway, Lura drew rein and sat for some moments in a brown study. She glanced up at the sun, then into the woods, which looked cool and inviting.

The long path passed the meridian, and should she follow the road it would not lose the goodly town of Stonefield.

She patted her horse gently, speaking to him as though he were human.

A low whinny answered her appeal, and Lura laughed.

"You say yes, good Romeo. Well, I'll think it on, as the old Romans would say."

When she came to the path that turned from the main highway, Lura drew rein and sat for some moments in a brown study. She glanced up at the sun, then into the woods, which looked cool and inviting.

The long path passed the meridian, and should she follow the road it would not lose the goodly town of Stonefield.

She patted her horse gently, speaking to him as though he were human.

A low whinny answered her appeal, and Lura laughed.

"You say yes, good Romeo. Well, I'll think it on, as the old Romans would say."

When she came to the path that turned from the main highway, Lura drew rein and sat for some moments in a brown study. She glanced up at the sun, then into the woods, which looked cool and inviting.

The long path passed the meridian, and should she follow the road it would not lose the goodly town of Stonefield.

She patted her horse gently, speaking to him as though he were human.

A low whinny answered her appeal, and Lura laughed.

"You say yes, good Romeo. Well, I'll think it on, as the old Romans would say."

When she came to the path that turned from the main highway, Lura drew rein and sat for some moments in a brown study. She glanced up at the sun, then into the woods, which looked cool and inviting.

The long path passed the meridian, and should she follow the road it would not lose the goodly town of Stonefield.

She patted her horse gently, speaking to him as though he were human.

A low whinny answered her appeal, and Lura laughed.

"I am only a visitor there, a friend of the family."

"You are Miss Joyce?"

"Yes, and you are—"

"Mother Cabrera. Cross my palm, good lady, and I'll tell you fortune." Then a wrinkled hand was held up to the gaze of the fair equestrian.

"Good! I've been wanting my fortune told for a long time. Here. Now tell me the truth and nothing but the truth, on your honor, or I'll haunt you."

Lura dropped a gold coin into the palm of the old wood witch. The recipient's eyes sparkled, and the bony fingers closed quickly over the precious metal. Thrusting the money from sight in the folds of her dirty gown, Mother Cabrera grasped the small brown hand held down by her inspection and glanced at the various lines crossing it.

There was no revelation of her thoughts in the parchment face of Mother Cabrera. She examined the hand in hers for some moments in silence.

"I see clouds ahead, trouble, a life sacrificed to the greed of one man," uttered the fortune-teller, at length, in a solemn voice.

The smile that rested until this moment on the face of Lura Joyce vanished, and a cool sensation crept over her gay spirits.

"I will not tell you more, the picture is too black. Poor child! poor child!" and Mother Cabrera dropped the girl's hand and turned away her head, as if to shut out some terrible vision.

"Tell me all," demanded Lura, half angrily.

"But it is too bad—"

"Then refund the money."

Once more Mother Cabrera looked into the piquant face of the girl on horseback. There was a look akin to pity on the parchment face, then she once more grasped Lura's hand and proceeded.

"The black clouds that I saw has been dispelled, pushed aside to make room for the light scene; it is one of blood. A man, dark and handsome, treads on a human heart. I hear a woman's wail of woe, see his hand upraised against her, and then she falls! Oh! it is wicked. She lies in a darksome place dead, and he goes out to win the great heiress, smiling as ever, with no one to know that he has murdered the girl who foolishly thought to thwart his will."

Again the witch paused.

Her words, spoken in a solemn tone, were not without their effect, and brave Lura could not repress the shudder that crept swiftly over her frame.

"That is all."

Mother Cabrera at once moved away toward the cabin.

With a long quivering sigh, Lura resumed her journey. She was not superstitious, but, nevertheless, the words of the old wood witch had a deep effect, and brought unpleasant thoughts to the mind of the orphan girl.

"Of course there's nothing in such things," argued Lura. "I thought I had more sense than to allow the sayings of a toothless hag to trouble me in the least."

Then she urged her horse to greater speed. The path soon became ill-defined, and she began to fear that she might lose it altogether. She noted that it was a mistake, her turning aside to seek a short cut to Stonefield.

"I do believe I shall have to turn back as it is," sighed the bewildered girl. Then she glanced up and saw a woman giving a goodly sum to have herself housed at Lone Hollow. She found herself in an open woods, the ground level and grass-grown. The place was pleasant enough, but the solitude was depressing and lonely. She felt her letter she thrust her hand into her bosom to draw it forth.

A low cry escaped her lips.

The letter was gone!

Quickly Lura wheeled her horse and glanced eagerly down the path she had followed. No white object met her vision. Then she made a dash for it, and, lo! there it was, in the hand of a woman who was looking at her with a look of surprise.

"How could you have lost it?"

"This was the burden of the young girl's thoughts as she rode slowly on the return. Eagerly securing the letter, she turned and fell Lura rode, and then she drew rein with a low exclamation of impatience and chagrin.

"I don't suppose the letter amounts to much after all. Grace can write another, and there are other days to come in which it can be delivered, but it is provoking after all. I wonder if old Mother Cabrera had a hand in this mischief. I'll interview the hag when I again strike her mansion."

Then, uttering a seemingly merry laugh, which had in it a ring of defiance for the fates, the maiden touched Romeo with her whip and was once more borne on her way.

Unnumbered stars came out and dotted heaven's blue orb. The threatened storm did not come, and when Lura found herself once more in the vicinity of the fortune-teller's cabin she began to breathe easier.

The trail she was following ran along near the edge of a deep gulch, which assured the girl that she could not be far from Mother Cabrera's cabin.

Suddenly Lura came to a stand. In vain did Lura urge, she refused to move another step, and soon began to snort with fear.

"Something is wrong, surely. I never knew Romeo to act so strangely before."

Feeling forward, she stepped into a sudden, startled cry. A human hand had grasped her bridle-rein, and a pair of glittering eyes peered up into her face.

For the moment the girl was paralyzed with a dreadful fear.

"Miss, you'll have to get off the horse."

Quickly Lura raised her riding-whip and dealt the speaker a blow in the face with all her strength, at the same time speaking to her horse.

With a mad cry the animal reared back. He clung to the rein, however, and as the horse forced ahead dragging him forward, another hand grasped the arm of Lura and snatched her from the saddle.

"Never mind the horse, Bill, I've got the gal."

And then Lura heard Romeo tearing swiftly down the hillside-path to where he left struggling in the arms of a man.

"Release me, villain!"

Then Lura was not permitted to speak further. A broad palm was pressed over her mouth, and strong arms lifted her from her feet. Struggle as she would, escape was impossible.

"Just keep quiet!" hissed a voice in her ear. "Mebbe you'll fare better if you quit your tantrum."

"Don't bother with the she cat," said a voice. "Here's the place to dump the critter, and no questions asked. It'll be an accident and the Cap'n will do over the cash when he hears on."

"Aye! that he will. Sure we've got the right one!"

"In course I be. Didn't Mane tell you was?"

"True for ye, Bill. Now lend a hand."

The helpless girl, unable to cry out or help herself in the least, was lifted high in the air and held a moment suspended between the arms of two men.

Two faces peered over a dark precipice into black depths.

A dull, sickening thud, then all was still, save the moan of the wind through the trees. After a brief minute the two ruffians turned from the spot and hurried away in the darkness.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

AGREEABLE to the wishes of the German Emperor, the theaters have resolved to abolish all French theatrical terms which have crept into the language.

BARBERS must be great travelers—they are continually working from poll to poll.

RACE PREJUDICES.

Thoughts Suggested by Recent Disturbances in an Ohio Town.

Another serious outbreak of race prejudice is reported from Ohio. New Richmond, a town of 3,000 inhabitants in Clermont County, has about 700 white school-children to 300 black.

After the repeal of the "black laws" two years ago, and the consequent throwing open of the public schools of the State to children of both races on equal terms, the negroes of New Richmond were persuaded to have their children kept in separate rooms, and thus virtually allow the old line distinction to be maintained. But one negro, James Ringold, decided to insist upon his rights, and sent his children into a room occupied by white children. The little negroes were abused and made miserable in every way, and finally Ringold appealed to the courts to protect him and them, suing the superintendent of schools and thirteen prominent citizens for \$5,000 damages. The Circuit Court decided in his favor, giving him one cent and costs. This showed the negroes generally that they could legally send their children into the rooms occupied by white children, and they did so on Friday. Great excitement was expressed, and so much disgust was manifested that the school board closed the schools for the remaining three months of the school year, as the only way out of the difficulty. The situation is thus described in a dispatch to the Times:

"This has been one of the most exciting Sundays the place has ever known. The streets have been crowded all day. All other topics were forgotten. Ministers counseled forbearance, and wise heads attempted to calm the impetuous. Each side professes to fear violence from the other. All the teachers will sue for their salaries for the remainder of the term, and costly litigation, if nothing else, is sure to follow. There is a prospect that a mandamus will be asked for in the morning to compel the school board to reopen the schools."

These outbreaks of race prejudice in Ohio, for the New Richmond incident is only the latest in a long series, may well be associated with the alarm now felt by the intelligent and well-to-do white citizens of Topeka, Kan., lest their city shall be bankrupted by the votes of the poor and ignorant negroes, who flooded thither a few years ago, and, with the unanimous protest of the whole Republican press last winter against the proposed admission of New Mexico as a state, because of the Territory's white inhabitants of the Territory, the ignorance not so dense nor widespread as that which prevails among the blacks in Southern States. All these incidents serve to illuminate the Southern problem, and they ought to show the most partisan the need of charity. Hereafter, when we hear of some abuse of a Southern negro by a Southern white, let us recall how negro children have been treated by whites in more than one Ohio town; when we find Southern whites complaining that the unrestricted rule of the blacks would involve the community in financial ruin, let us think of Topeka's complaint; when we are told by Southern Democrats that the control of a Southern State by its majority of ignorant blacks would be intolerable, let us remember that the Republican party of the North refused to allow the majority of ignorant whites in New Mexico a share in the government of the Union because such an idea was intolerable.—N. Y. Post.

NOTE THE DIFFERENCE.

Civil-Service Reform as Practiced by Reformers Ben Harrison.

When President Cleveland had been less than a month in office, the question of appointing General Pearson, successor in the New York postmaster's office, was very pressing, and it was soon announced that Postmaster Pearson had been reappointed to that important Federal office. Commenting on this announcement in its issue of April 1, 1885, the New York Tribune said:

"The reappointment of Postmaster Pearson gives general satisfaction to those citizens who care for efficiency in that branch of the public service. It satisfies the public because it is a good thing in itself, because Mr. Pearson is one of many Republican officials who have proved so constant in their removal on whatever ground, and irrespective of the personal merit of any who may be selected in their stead, would be a positive detriment to the public service. Such an appointment is, of course, to be commended most heartily as a good thing in itself."

"In itself this appointment is admirable," Mr. Pearson's unquestioned and superior fitness renders his retention in office the clear duty of a President who means to improve and not to degrade the public service.

President Cleveland was a Democrat, and Mr. Pearson never made any disguise of the fact that he was a Republican. The Tribune is right, however, in saying that his "superior fitness" had never been questioned, and for that reason, caring mainly for the efficiency of the service, Mr. Cleveland retained him in the office which he had filled with satisfaction by Democrats and Republicans alike.

Before Mr. Harrison had been a month in office, Postmaster Pearson's term expired, and the question of his successor again became a pressing one. Nobody pretends that after four years of additional experience Postmaster Pearson's "superior fitness" had become less unquestioned than in 1885, but the Tribune said not a word in regard to his superior fitness, or his efficiency, or the general satisfaction he had given to those citizens who care for efficiency in that branch of the public service; and President Harrison, ignoring the fact that Pearson had been reappointed, had proved strong enough to convince President Cleveland, has just given the postmaster's office to Mr. Cornelius Van Cott, a man who has had no experience whatever in the mail service, who has no record of efficiency and superior fitness, and who had no advantage over General Pearson in the matter of Republicanism, except that he is more acceptable to the machine and the spoilsman. No single incident has more clearly brought out the difference between the two administrations than President Cleveland and President Harrison. Those who note it carefully and grasp its significance will understand why President Cleveland

will rank in history among the best and most high-minded Presidents that the country has had, and why President Harrison in the opinion of the best observers is slowly gravitating to the foot of the illustrious line.—St. Louis Republic.

NOTES OF THE DAY.

The missions to China, Persia and Turkey are still to be filled, and Webb Hayes, Jamie Garfield and Allen Arthur not yet provided for!—Washington Critic.

It begins to look as if the President didn't propose to divide and conquer the solid South with the plums at his disposal. The only mission it has got so far is an omission.—Boston Herald.

If Mr. Halstead had consulted so experienced a poultry man as his friend Rutherford B. Hayes the latter would have told him that one of the strongest traits of a chicken is a tendency to come home to roost.—Chicago Herald.

Mr. Harrison is heartily desirous of annexing Cuba. It would make a lot of new offices, and five thousand raving Republicans could be sent to the island before the stamping out of the yellow fever should begin.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Consul-General New's description of his position as a "place without any frills but with much swag" is graphic but hardly wise. So truthful and appropriate an adaptation of the burglar's vocabulary to the spoils of politics should be avoided by the advocates of the system.—Pittsburgh Dispatch.

The millionaire Senators who are trying to convince the country that their services are worth \$10,000 a year have undertaken a tough job. If these able patriots don't like the present Congressional salary they are at liberty to follow the advice of the late Robert Toombs and "pour it back in the jug."—Macon Telegraph.

The spring elections in St. Louis, Chicago, Cincinnati, Kansas City and other Western municipalities have swept over the party machines like a cyclone, leaving only the most dilapidated wrecks of bossism behind. When the people are awake the bosses generally have use for their cyclone pits.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

"Trustocracy" is